The PULPIT

A Periodical of Contemporary Preaching

MARCH, 1950

My Response to the Pope's Invitation

By EDWARD HUGHES PRUDEN

God and the Tax Assessor

By EUGENE M. AUSTIN

Blessed Are the Debonair

By WILLIAM G. LAW

Glimpses of Greatness

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God Is My Light

By FRANCIS B. SAYRE

What Makes a Good Sermon?

SERIES III

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Charles Clayton Morrison, *Editor*

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Features For April

REALITY BREAKS THROUGH, a sermon by R. P. Marshall of Sunbury, Pennsylvania, will help to shatter the illusion of secularism, by helping us to catch fleeting glimpses of the vast unknown.

THE CHRISTIAN IDEA OF THE FUTURE LIFE is a helpful selection of reasons for believing in personal immortality and is coupled with a literary enhancement of the idea. The preacher is Herbert Booth Smith of Burlingame, California.

THE VINDICATION OF THE CROSS by Earl H. Furgeson of the Westminster Theological Seminary in Westminster, Maryland, undergirds the conviction that God's last word is not the word of death but the word of life.

THE FURNISHED ROOM is a communion meditation for Maundy Thursday by Raymond E. Balcomb of Ashland, Massachusetts. The sermon is based on the fact that the furnishings of that "furnished room" included more than household objects.

ON BEING ORIGINAL is a thought-provoking article on one of the most prevalent temptations of the clergy. The author is F. Gerald Ensley, pastor of the North Broadway Methodist Church in Columbus, Ohio.

There will be another sermon by the pastor of the third church in the series of twelve Great Churches of America being studied by the editors of *The Christian Century.*

Also the April issue will contain a children's sermon and a variety of helpful sermon illustrations, as well as several stimulating sermon-reviews.

WHO'S WHO IN THIS ISSUE

EUGENE M. AUSTIN is pastor of the Baptist Church in Charleston, W. Va. A volume of his sermons, *The Harvest of the Spirit,* was published in 1943.

FRANCIS B. SAYRE, Ambassador, is the Representative of the United States in the Trusteeship Council of the United Nations.

WILLIAM G. LAW is pastor of the Edgewater Methodist Church, Minneapolis, Minn.

D. A. BODE has been pastor of the First Evangelical and Reformed Church of New Knoxville, Ohio, since 1941. He was a member of the first General Council of the Evangelical and Reformed Church and is at present a member of the Commission on Benevolent Institutions.

EDWARD HUGHES PRUDEN is a graduate of Yale Divinity School, received his Ph.D. from the University of Edinburgh, and has been pastor of The First Baptist Church of Washington, D. C. since 1936.

G. CURTIS JONES is pastor of the Seventh-Street Christian Church in Richmond, Va.

ELMER J. GORMAN is Captain for Transcontinental and Western Air, Inc.

JOHN E. BATES is pastor of the Middletown Baptist Church in Middletown, N. J.

LUTHER W. YOUNGDAHL has been governor of the state of Minnesota since 1947.

BRADSHAW MINTENER, now Vice President and General Counsel for Pillsbury Mills in Minneapolis, Minnesota, is a graduate of Yale, attended Oxford, Harvard, and received his law degree from the University of Minnesota Law School in 1929. Mr. Mintener is president of numerous civic and professional organizations and is chairman of the Pastoral Relations Committee of Hennepin Avenue Methodist Church in Minneapolis.

S. KENDRICK GUERNSEY, Executive Vice President of Gulf Life Insurance Company of Jacksonville, Fla., was International President of Rotary in 1947 and made extensive trips throughout the world. He has received honor awards from Brazil, France, Cuba, and the Dominican Republic.

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THE EDITOR'S PAGE

The Event of the Month

THE SECOND anniversary of Protestants and Other Americans United for Separation of Church and State—POAU, for short—was observed in Washington, D. C. with two public meetings. The first, held in Calvary Baptist Church, was addressed by Congressman Barden of North Carolina, Professor W. Russell Bowie of Union Theological Seminary, Freda Kirchway, Editor of *The Nation* and Dr. Edwin McNeil Poteat, of Raleigh, North Carolina, President of POAU. The second was a great mass meeting held in Constitution Hall which was addressed by Dean Glenn L. Archer, executive director of POAU, and myself. Telegrams were read from President John A. Mackay, of Princeton Theological Seminary, and Methodist Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam of New York. The event was highlighted by the tense situation existing in Congress over the issue of including tax appropriation to parochial schools in connection with a bill for federal aid to public education. Congressman Barden captured his large audience by his forthright denunciation of such a misappropriation of public funds. He gave assurance that a new bill along the same lines as the one which caused Cardinal Spellman of New York publicly to call him an "apostle of bigotry," and whose support in principle by Eleanor Roosevelt brought down upon her head the cardinal's insulting characterization of her stand as "unworthy of an American Mother." Mr. Barden has since introduced his bill, H.R. 7160. Its fate in Congress is not yet determined. The pressure of the Roman church against it and in favor of Senate Bill S. 246, is tremendous. Now is the time to write your congressman.

Keep Church and State Separate!

The Book of the Month

SIGNS OF HOPE IN A CENTURY OF DESPAIR, *by Elton Trueblood, Harper. $1.00.*

ELTON TRUEBLOOD is our C. S. Lewis. The two men are alike in putting their thought into small books, but the Quaker philosopher puts more into his books than does the Anglican author of the famous *Screwtape Letters.* The main similarity is in their common gift of writing on great matters with extraordinary lucidity. In reading Trueblood the thought keeps recurring that this author who writes as an ecumenical minded churchman, and a neo-orthodox one at that, is a Quaker. This is significant. Quakers never have been noted for churchmanship nor for a keen interest in the profundities of theology. They disclaim the name "church" and call themselves the "*Society* of Friends." Their most marked characteristics have been a religious quietism, combined with a pronounced moralistic activism. In the late Rufus Jones they produced a gifted and gracious philosopher. His mantle has now fallen upon Elton Trueblood. In this book he finds his "signs of hope" not so much in the world of despair as in the Christian church. They are: (1) the ecumenical movement, (2) the neo-orthodox theology, (3) the emergence of lay religion and (4) the multiplication of special groups of Christians committed to a specific outlook or undertaking—commonly called "cells". The author supports church union despite his assertion on pages 47-48 that denominations can raise more money for missions and do a lot of other things better than a united church could, and his feeling for the church is much more profound than that expressed in his first book, *The Predicament of Modern Man.*

A Thought for the Month

CHRISTIAN faith stands today at the threshold of its supreme opportunity. Every alternative to the gospel of Christ has proved futile, misleading and disastrous. The messiahs in which mankind has trusted for salvation are now seen as blind leaders of the blind. The faith in evolutionary progress "onward and upward forever" has been swallowed up in the present chaos. The once universal belief that science held the key that would unlock the long-closed gate of paradise is now greeted with a sardonic shrug. The hope that the emergence of a noble philosophy transcending science would invest human life with profound and irresistible meaning, has proved vain, though our wise men have never been more devoted to their undertaking. The trust in universal education has been shattered on the hard fact that the world's troubles can be traced directly to the best educated nations in the modern world. All these messiahs rested their claims upon the humanistic assumption of the sufficiency of man's powers. The disorder of our man-made civilization and the emptiness of man's soul constitute a divine invitation for Christian faith to enter the chaos and the void with the Christian gospel. If it be said that Christianity, too, has failed, the reply must be that Christ has not failed, but that we Christians and his church have failed *him!* We, too, have half-believed the seductive appeals of the false messiahs, and have divided with them our allegiance to Christ. But it should be easier today to believe in him and to proclaim his gospel than at any time in history, because Christ is the only alternative to the spiritual bankruptcy of our world. With Peter, we can now say: "Lord, to whom else shall we go?"

Faith Versus Its Alternatives

Charles Clayton Morrison

My Response to the Pope's Invitation

By EDWARD HUGHES PRUDEN

WHILE the recent invitation of the pope to all Protestants to unite with the Roman Catholic Church was not sent to me personally, I am under the impression that he hoped each individual would accept it as a personal invitation, and that is why I am taking the liberty of responding to his appeal.

Let me say emphatically that I am presenting this response in the most sympathetic and brotherly spirit, and I have no desire whatever to be a party to a religious controversy or a theological debate. During the lifetime of my own brother according to the flesh, it never occurred to us that a frank expression of our differences should ever be considered an unbrotherly act, and whether we revealed our divergences of opinion to one another privately or in the presence of others, it was always evident to everyone that we were disagreeing without becoming disagreeable, and that beneath our differences there was an unmistakable bond which would forever bind us together as brothers. While there is much about the Roman Church which I cannot accept, and which at times I must in all good conscience oppose, I can say in all sincerity that there is also much about its interpretation of Christianity which warms my heart and proves to be a blessing to my life.

THE CHURCH NOT AN ORGANIZATION

Let me say in the first place, that in common with a great multitude of other non-Catholic Christians, I desire intensely a larger degree of unity within the spiritual family of Christ. I do not believe, however, that this unity is at all dependent upon a highly organized ecclesiastical body. The true church of Christ, as I understand it, is a spiritual fellowship rather than an organization; it includes true disciples of the Master in every communion, and some perhaps who have not yet found their way into *any* particular communion.

I belong to a denomination which by its very genius is committed to a policy of freedom not only for the local congregation but also for the individual Christian; and I would oppose just as vigorously any tendency within my own denomination to create a gigantic ecclesiastical organization possessing tremendous authoritarian powers as I now oppose any suggestion that non-Catholic Christians unite with the Church of Rome, thereby increasing the dangerous temptations which already confront the Roman Church.

I sincerely look forward to the day when we can arrive at some procedure which will make it possible for us to work together as Christians without giving the impression to the world that we are competing groups, but if such an arrangement is to receive the loyalty and cooperation of the communion to which I belong, it must guarantee to us as individuals and as local churches that liberty of conscience and action for which our forefathers in the faith suffered and died. Our freedom in Christ has been purchased at a tremendous price, and we could never give any serious consideration to a proposal which would result in creating a situation in the future comparable to the tragic situations in the past out of which, by the grace of God, we have come.

RELIGIOUS FREEDOM IS VITAL

We entertain no illusions as to some of the results of man's spiritual freedom, but however great the price may be in order to obtain it, we feel that the possession of such a gift is well worth the price. Many will oppose the right and uphold the wrong, but it is through trial and error, success and failure, and the other phases of human experience that we learn what is true and good and eternal. We would become too complacent and suffer moral and intellectual decadence if we were not being constantly prodded and challenged by those who do not share our opinions or appreciate our ideals.

It is in the freedom of dissenting individuals and groups to express their views without intimidation that progress is assured and abuses ultimately are corrected both in the state as well as in the realm of religion. Our rejection, then, of an invitation to become a part of a gigantic ecclesiastical hierarchy, and our vigorous insistence upon personal and religious freedom to approach God according to the dictates of our own hearts, is taken in full knowledge that such freedom may well lead to the encouragement of dissenting opinions and even harsh criticisms. However, it is our firm conviction that all of this serves a useful purpose and contributes to an ultimate good. We heartily endorse the statement of John Milton when he said: "Let Truth and Falsehood grapple. Whoever knew Truth put to the worse in a free and open encounter?"

It was in this spirit that Roger Williams founded the first settlement in the New World dedicated to religious liberty and soul freedom. We can never forget, that as Charles and Mary Beard have said in their *Basic History of the United States,* "Nowhere in the Old World at the beginning of American colonization was there anything like religious tolerance in the modern sense of the term; that is, the right of every person to join any church he or she pleases, or none at all, and to express his or her opinions freely on matters of religion." Here in America, where the gigantic struggle for religious freedom was largely fought and won, we feel particularly bound to guard at all costs this gift of freedom which has been purchased for us at so great a price.

The late Professor William James of Harvard University, in his book, *The Varieties of Religious Experience,* has asked a significant question and provided a memorable answer: "Is the existence of so many religious types and sects and creeds regrettable? To these questions I answer 'No' emphatically. And my reason is that I do not see how it is possible that creatures in such different positions and with such different powers as human individuals are, should have exactly the same functions and the same duties. . . . If an Emerson were forced to be a Wesley, or a Moody forced to be a Whitman, the total human consciousness of the divine would suffer. The divine can mean no single quality; it must mean a group of qualities, by being champions of which in alternation, different men may all find worthy missions. . . . Unquestionably, some men have the completer experience and the higher vocation, here just as in the social world; but for each man to stay in his own experience, whatever it be, and for others to tolerate him there, is surely best." Many of us would go even further and say that men must not only be *tolerated* when they differ from our own point of view, but they must be *understood* and *appreciated.*

UNITY IN VARIETY POSSIBLE

Any tendency to suggest that all men should affiliate themselves with any *one* expression of the Christian faith, however rewarding the experiences of that particular expression may be; and any suggestion that men cannot discover the truth until they decide to seek it in the channels which we have personally found rewarding, seems utterly foreign to the spirit of the New Testament. We cannot believe that this variety of approach to the vital relationship between God and man is any barrier to a thoroughly cooperative Christianity. In fact, Protestants are constantly making repeated attempts to work in closer cooperation with Catholics in giving support to the ideals which we believe we hold in common, but many of these attempts have failed because of the position which the Catholic Church has taken in regard to its alleged primary place in the world as the only true representative of Christ and his gospel. Again and again I have been a member of committees where cooperative ventures were being attempted, only to be reminded repeatedly that any joint meetings representative of the two bodies could not be held either in a Catholic or a Protestant Church due to the traditional views of the Roman Church concerning itself as the "one true church."

It is rather difficult for many of us to understand why the pope should entertain any substantial expectation that Protestants would forsake their own convictions and unite with the Catholic Church when the Church of Rome refuses to grant to Protestants those elementary expressions of cooperation on a spiritual level which eventually would pave the way for a growing sense of unity. If it should be said in reply to this statement that a number of cooperative ventures are now in progress, my own response would be that such ventures will never be very significant as long as it is impossible for us to meet together in the churches of both communions on an equal spiritual footing.

While I have every reason to believe that the pope's invitation to Protestants was sincerely extended and that he believes that such a union with the Catholic Church would promote the moral and spiritual welfare of the world, nevertheless it must be said quite frankly that the invitation is in itself a formidable hindrance to a larger degree of spiritual unity, since it only serves to perpetuate the ancient claim of the Roman Catholic Church that it is "the one true church." One cannot help but wonder what would happen to the degree of unity already achieved among Christians today, if each particular expression of the Christian faith should assume that it is the one true expression of Christ and his message for mankind.

It is our abiding conviction that true kinship to Christ is not a matter of historical connections traced across the centuries, but is rather a matter of how closely we adhere to the simplicity, the purity, and the spiritual quality of that New Testament Church which Christ established during his earthly ministry. While we admire much of that for which the Roman Church stands, we must say in all brotherly frankness that many of the traditions and customs which have accumulated within the Roman Church, and the exalted detachment which some officials of the Roman Church require for themselves, seem a far cry from the lowly Nazarene who in simple garb, as a man of the people, moved as a friend among the masses, serving the needs of his fellowmen.

THE SUPERIOR DEFENSE

We believe sincerely that the spiritual forces of the world should stand unitedly against atheistic communism and all of its totalitarian powers, but we cannot possibly believe that this could be achieved by asking millions of Christians to violate their consciences and forsake the free spiritual atmosphere which they have breathed so long, in order to become a part of a totalitarian religious organization. We believe that communism is not only wrong because it is atheistic, but because it is oppressive, and that one of its most deplorable characteristics is its tendency to force all of those under its influence to submit to the will of a few and to accept, without question, the dictates of those in authority. It is inconceivable that one form of totalitarianism can be defeated by the mere adoption of another form, however exalted the ideals of the other may be. The very fact that communism in Italy has become such a tremendous force in that nation after hundreds of years of the presence there of the headquarters of the Roman Church, makes us wonder if the Roman Church is really the answer to communism which is frequently claimed for it. Where religious liberty prevails and the competency of individuals to find God and worship him is fully recognized, communism doesn't have a chance.

In all honesty the Christian Church must admit that it is partially responsible in some areas for the rise of communism because of its failure to demonstrate a

deeper concern for the needs of men. No amount of condemnation of communism *now* can atone for spiritual blindness in the past. The only way in which communism can be successfully met and overcome is to provide the world with unmistakable proof that Christianity has more to offer both for the body and the soul than communism or any other ideology can ever conceive. More repentance and reform within the Christian spiritual household might do more to halt the spread of communism than all our resolutions and denunciations.

In closing it should be repeated that these words have been written with no sense of animosity or ill-will, but in response to an inescapable conviction that such an invitation to the Protestant world from a fellow Christian at a time like this must not be ignored. While points of difference have been referred to, it is my own fervent prayer, and the prayer of millions of other Christians, that the day may speedily come when a true spiritual unity among the followers of Christ may be realized, and a practical, cooperative arrangement for carrying on his program achieved. We believe that this can be done, not in spite of, but even *because of* the varying interpretations of the Christian faith which we cherish, and our willingness to respect one another's differences.

Christian unity will never come through submitting to organizational patterns or accepting without question inherited creeds. It will only come through a full recognition of a common loyalty to Christ as the one supreme authority of our lives, and an unshakeable determination to do his will, as we see it and understand it, in a spirit of love and brotherhood toward all those who are striving to do the same thing. This, many of us believe, will be the fulfillment of the prayer of Christ: "That they all may be one."

God and the Tax Assessor

By EUGENE M. AUSTIN

—"And Jesus said, Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's . . ."—Mark 12:17.

ONE DAY Jesus was confronted by a group of substantial citizens who wanted to see where he stood on the tax question. Anyone who makes a bid for public leadership has to face that question sooner or later, as any politician will testify. It may not be the first question the voter asks; but it is always in the back of his mind: What about taxes? And Jesus, sublime practitioner of the practical that he was, did not evade the question. Instead, he went straight to the heart of the matter: "Give unto Ceasar the things that are Ceasar's," he said, "and unto God the things that are God's."

I would observe, first of all, that we Protestants have been inclined to place the stress upon the last half of the Master's adomination. For the last four hundred years we have been so concerned to see that 'the things that are God's' shall not be tampered with by the state, that we have been inclined to play down the other side of it, that Casear has certain claims upon us, too. But the violation of one half of Christ's command constitutes as great an evil as the other. It is as much a sin, said Jesus, *to cheat on your taxes* as it is to *cheat on your tithe!* Christian stewardship has much to say about both sides of that responsibility.

One of the fascinating things about preaching is the way it gets the preacher into trouble. I never realized how serious the Master was about our being completely honest toward the government until I began to study this text. I dug back into my files and took out my last Kanawha County Personal Property tax receipt. For the first time in all these years I examined it carefully and found that the total evaluation placed upon my personal property was $500.00; and it was that amount upon which I was paying taxes. Why, the books in my study are worth more than that! My tax payments to Kanawha County have been only one-sixth what they should have been; and I, a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ, have been committing a sin concerning which Jesus gave us as clear guidance as anything recorded in the entire New Testament! "Render unto Caesar the things that are Casear's!"

CONSEQUENCES OF DISOBEDIENCE

So, my second observation is that if Jesus meant what he said, then this is perhaps the reason why our community life is falling apart in so many ways. It is difficult to say which things are most important to our life together, and few of us would agree, but certainly we are united in our conviction that the children should have the best that our hearts and our community resources can provide.

Two weeks ago when the schools of our city were opening, I received a number of telephone calls from parents in the neighborhood about conditions in one of the elementary schools. What they told me I did not believe could be true until I visited the school. The teachers, whom I respect and honor, had been scrubbing on their hands and knees! Classes had been meeting only for an hour a day, while the children helped the teachers get the rooms fit to meet in! Thirty-eight tiny first-

graders were jammed into a room no larger than my study! No wonder the parents were frantic. I was angry. My first impulse was what anyone's is—to see that the situation was made a public scandal, that pictures be printed in the newspaper, that someone lose his job! But when I went into the matter I found that our county school people had been held up all summer until state funds were released for house-cleaning in late July, that they are taking 50,000 children into the schools this fall when they simply do not have room for more than 42,000; and when I see what is accomplished here as compared with the work that is done in the wealthy public schools of New York and Massachusetts, I marvel that so much is accomplished with so little. Wherever I turn in the community—to the schools, the courts, the children's agencies, the health services—it is the same situation: trained, consecrated Christian people, trying to build a good life for the children of this Kanawha Valley, but with never enough money to meet the need.

TEMPTATION TO RATIONALIZE

But, I said to myself, the money is here. This valley is prosperous with its great factories, thriving businesses, bulging banks, and busy people. Why isn't there enough money for the children and their needs? So I went down to the Court House and talked with the officials there. But the more I talked with them about taxes and the meager assessment on property, the more I thought about that tax receipt back in my files. No use blaming the public school authorities, trying to make bricks without straw. No use blaming the elected officials, trying to raise just enough money to pay the bills and still stay in office—for who's going to vote for any official who raises the taxes! No, there is no one to blame for those thirty-eight first-grade children and their harrassed teacher, but the Reverend Eugene M. Austin, who preferred to pay just one-sixth of what he owed the county government, and close his eyes and ears to the needs of society around him. And if a minister of the Gospel could be guilty of ignoring Christ's clear word about rendering full measure to Ceasar of the things that are Caesar's, then it is small wonder that our social community is falling apart.

In discussing this matter with my friends I have come upon two objections. The first is that it is not the taxpayer's responsibility to set a just evaluation upon his possessions; it is the assessor's job. I resist that suggestion. No man is the keeper of my conscience. It is as much my responsibility to pay Casear what I owe him, as it is for him to see that I do. The other objection is that the county government is corrupt and that to pay added taxes would only be to increase corruption. Frankly, I do not pretend to know how corrupt our county is. Like thousands of other citizens of Kanawha County, I have been quite content with a political situation in which the taxes were kept as low as possible and the politicians kept as far away from me as possible. And I suspect that if I were investing more of my hard-earned money in county enterprises, I would be far more concerned about how efficiently that money is spent!

No doubt someone in the congregation is saying, why doesn't the preacher talk about spiritual matters! Ah, but I have! I have been applying to our daily lives, as honestly as I could, the implications of Christ's command to "Render unto Ceaser the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's." I have said, first, that we have ignored the first part of that command to stress the last; and second, that because we have taken lightly this express word of our Saviour, our common life is falling apart and our children are paying the price of our sin. And I say, finally, that the reason our spiritual life rings hollow, and our Christian testimony so often is like a clanging cymbal is that we have been dishonest with Caesar.

All of us are praying for a great revival of spiritual religion in this great capitol city of ours, with the spirit of Pentecost descending upon the souls of men. But the true revival will never come until men become absolutely honest, until they get their pencils out and begin to figure honestly what they owe society, even according to the law. Do something about that, and a revival of spiritual religion will descend upon this city, the like of which we have never known! Who of you will join me in laying that kind of groundwork for a real spiritual revival—a revival that starts in the hearts of honest, godly men?

On another occasion Jesus told men how to pray in the temple. He said that if, when you went to pray, your brother had aught against you, you were first to go and get things straightened out with your brother; and then return to the temple and pray. For these past two weeks whenever I have tried to pray, the faces of those thirty-eight first graders have stood in the way of effective prayer. But I got it worked out this week so that my prayers seem to go a little better. I went down to the county assessor's office and arranged to have my county taxes increased by about six times, so that now I feel as if I will be paying more nearly upon an honest evaluation of what I own. And through all this experience I have come to a profound spiritual discovery—one which Jesus used when he talked about the things that are Caesar's and the things that are God's —that I can't expect things to go right in my own life or in my community so long as I am content to short-change God—or the tax assessor.

"I should be utterly ashamed if my soul had shriveled up to such an extent that I had to get out and drink whiskey."—*George Bernard Shaw.*

"Those who deny freedom to others deserve it not themselves, and, under the rule of a just God, cannot long retain it."—*Abraham Lincoln.*

"A survey of our coal fields reveals enough fuel still underground to keep us in coal strikes for 160 years." —*Grit.*

Blessed Are the Debonair

By WILLIAM G. LAW

JESUS SAID, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." Any schoolboy knows that is not true. Just try to be meek on the school playground and see how one gets pushed around! Yet, if it were not so, men would have forgotten that Jesus said it centuries ago. Jesus must have been on the track of something. There must be some quality evil-doers have that gets them into trouble, something that destroys them. And there must be some quality the meek have which makes for life. For some reason, the meek are around when the evildoers have departed. Let us see if we can discover what these qualities are.

Long before Clarence Day, Jr., ever thought of writing "Life With Father," he read his grandfather's French Bible. He was mostly disappointed in it. Instead of the regal "leviathan" of the King James version he found a very plebian "le crocodile." "Behold now Behemoth" had a spine-tingle to it that "See the Hippopotamus" quite lacked; and Moses and Jehovah were simply "irate" with the children of Israel, instead of "divinely wroth." But his disgust was swept away by ecstasy when he came to the Beatitudes and discovered, not "blessed are the meek," which he had never liked at all, but "heureux les debonnaires!" "Blessed are the debonair!" That, he felt, was something like it! That was the way his father was, and Gallahad, and God. The kingdom belonged to men like that.

THE MEANING OF MEEKNESS

The word that so set the bells ringing for the small boy means the same in Greek, regardless of its being translated "meek" or "debonair." It means gentle, mild, meek, with overtones of sincerity. It describes the sort of man who will, under no circumstances, sell his own soul, and who manages with a quiet sort of gallantry to do an exceedingly effective job of living. It must have been that the Frenchman who made the translation followed up this track to arrive at "debonair," which means "of a good disposition, characterized by light-heartedness." To be debonair is to be hi-spirited but not narrow-minded, ardent but not dogmatic, sincere but not intolerant. It is to take one's cause seriously, but one's self not seriously at all. It is to be gentle and gracious in outlook. Jesus was looking at the same sort of person when he said, "greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life (pour out his spirit lavishly, happily) for his friends."

One immediately recalls Mary Magdalene who did a sacrificial and debonair thing when she anointed the feet of Jesus with spikenard which was precious and very costly. When the disciples objected, Jesus said "Leave her alone. She hath done a beautiful thing. Wherever the gospel is preached throughout the whole world, this that she has done shall be spoken of as a memorial to her." Jesus understood.

He also understood Albert Schweitzer in a jungle that needed medicine more than music, and Grenfell on the Labrador coast, and Florence Nightingale going through the wards at night, with her face etched in silhouette by the light of her lamp. Such as these are gallant in spirit and forever sincere.

Jesus understands, also, the debonair spirits of those who watch the golden dreams of youth slip away into the tedious and tense labors of middle life, all the while being true to the trusts life has laid upon them. He knows the gallantry of those who accept life's frustrations and smile their way through the deeper satisfactions, and those who learn joy through bereavement. He counts among his spiritual kinfolks those who accept serenely the buffets life deals out to those who have strong convictions. He must love above all those who make a life of splendid adventure in spite of misfortune and slender resources.

Men have loved St. Francis for a thousand years because he found room in the common life for a debonair spirit. He understood that the essence of moving a field was the need of people for bread, and for him labor was a joyous sacrament supporting the growth of immortal souls. He was as single in his purposes as a star is in casting light, and no one, save our Lord, ever knew such holy joy.

It was of such debonair spirits that Lynn Harold Hough was thinking when he spoke of "a clan of gallant gentlemen." It was to such that Dwight L. Moody appealed with his gospel of duty, transformed by love into radiant desire. John Wesley would have understood the sainted Frenchman's use of "debonair" for he began each Beatitude in his own translation with "happy" not "blessed."

Jesus himself said "It is *happier* to give than to receive," and he gave the advice which remains forever an apt description of the meek: "I send you forth as sheep into the midst of wolves. Be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves."

Some of our Saviour's own words show him as a supreme example of living what he taught, for as the gloom encircled him his spirit remained blithe, and he said, "My Father worketh hitherto and I work." "Be of good cheer! I have overcome the world."

FATE OF THE NON-MEEK

I heard a cynic say once, as he smiled smugly and rubbed his hands, "I am perfectly willing for the meek to inherit the earth in due time, but in the meantime I plan to enjoy it." His idea seems like such a simple way to enjoy life. The flaw in his thinking is most

readily discernible to a minister who does much pastoral counselling, and who must, perforce, spend very considerable amounts of time counselling men and women who are bored and frustrated by trying to live on nothing more substantial than his kind of enjoyment. They have no lift for the spirit.

I heard another cynic say, "perhaps the meek will inherit the earth; in the meantime they get dreadfully kicked around!" His remark seems rather reasonable, until we remember the fate of the non-meek. The nazi's thought they were realisits, and they were certainly non-meek. They did not intend that anyone should push them around, but their fate is not pleasant to contemplate. It would seem that no man begins to act in a non-meek manner without provoking some other man to the same action, and after the non-meek are all done they are in bad condition. It is not the meek who bathe the earth in their own blood. They are the ones who are left, to begin with unconquerable tenacity the task of rebuilding.

Mahatma Gandhi was one of the meek, and, although he seemed a comic figure at times to the west, Winston Churchill did not laugh when the issue was drawn. That little brown man of one hundred and eight pounds, living on goat-milk and vegetables, spending hours at his spinning wheel, had a "soul-force." Every *realist* knew such a force to be totally helpless, but history will show that it performed one of the few really constructive acts our civilization saw over a period of a generation: The freeing of India.

Gandhi said he found his power in the Sermon on the Mount, and it was of this quality of meekness. Gandhi could laugh and he could fight; but it was never Gandhi he was fighting for. Always he fought for some rightness. He would do no one any harm, but he would suffer forever for justice.

Characteristic of his life and method was the place where he was living at the time of his assassination. The outcasts of India parallel the lot of the negro in America at many points. They are segregated, socially ostracized, economically discriminated against. Gandhi wrote against these evils, but much more to the point, he went to live with the outcasts. He adopted several outcast children as his own, which was much as if Abraham Lincoln had adopted several negro children. It was in his little white-walled mud hut, looking out upon a courtyard of baked clay, beaten hard by passing feet, that the British Cabinet Mission came to negotiate.

It is revealing of the quality of the man that they came with perfect seriousness. If a politician had gone there to live, or a Hollywood figure had made that gesture the world would have sensed the theatrical. But this was the third most powerful man alive, or was he the first? His dwelling there rang perfectly true to his nature and the quality of his meekness. He was a man who could fast five days and end a war in which 350,000 people had been slain. No man in the western world had moral power sufficient to end the strife between Jew and Arab in Palestine, as Gandhi ended the strife between India and Pakistan. But then, we aren't meek; which suddenly causes one to remember who Jesus said would inherit the earth.

Gandhi was a great soul. He, with these others and many more, are windows out of which we can look to see what meekness is. As we look we can reflect that save for this debonair soul force Jesus revealed for us, men are prisoners of events. The meek are the builders and the lifters.

THE FINAL FACTOR

When Ernest Troeltsch was an old, old man he saw the turn toward paganism which German thought was taking, and planned one more book to drive away, if he could, the choking black clouds of totalitarianism. No one read it, and he was swept away by the rising tide, but he looked back over his shoulder to smile at friends across the Atlantic who had sent him a gift of money to sustain him, and expressed his gratitude and his philosophy: "It is things like this which will finally bring peace among the nations. Just now the Marxists and the militarists are in the saddle, riding roughshod over the rights of persons. . . . They are wrong. . . . Ideas, spirits, are more redeeming than long range guns or even peace pacts. The final factor is spiritual."

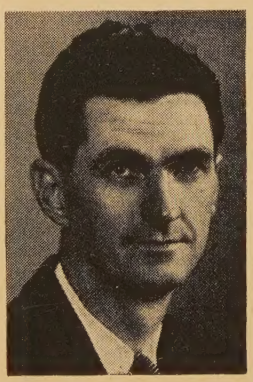
So it is, in your life, in my life, and in the world's life: Blessed are the debonair, for they shall re-inspire, they shall re-possess, they shall inherit the earth.

Glimpses of Greatness

By G. CURTIS JONES

"But this is your hour . . ." Luke 22:53. (RSV)

THERE is a matchless greatness about our Lord in the Garden of Gethsemane. Here Jesus was tested as never a man was tested. His colleagues cowered; the disciples slept while he agonized in prayer; churchmen and scoffers were in the hysterical mob that pressed in upon him.



The courage and compassion of Jesus as he stood before his accusers is a scintillating study in greatness. Not once did he lash out against his enemies. When one drew his sword and smote off the right ear of a slave, Christ performed his blessed ministry of healing. When human hounds held him at bay, greatness was radiated in all its glory.

When is a man a great man? Shakespeare suggested the answer when he said, "He is not great, who is not greatly good."

I

A man's true character exerts itself in the kick-backs of life. Jonathan Edwards was born in East Windsor, Connecticut, October 5, 1703. His father was minister of the Congregational Church in the village for sixty-four years. Jonathan entered Yale at thirteen, and graduated when seventeen years of age.

After seminary and ordination, he returned to Yale as a tutor. Later, he became the colleague of his grandfather, Solomon Stoddard, who was preaching at the Congregational Church in Northampton, Massachusetts. When the senior minister died, Jonathan Edwards became minister of the church at the early age of twenty-six.

Five years later, this young preached stepped into sanctuary fame. He was one of the most original theologians in America. Perhaps his most-discussed sermon was, *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God.* He became the pioneering evangelist of New England.

Then, in 1744, controversy developed. Revival enthusiasm waned. Not a single person took membership with his church for four years. Agitation for a new minister spread. Personal bitterness grew, and in 1750 the church dismissed its pastor. Mr. Edwards was then forty-seven, with a wife and ten children to support. However, the Northampton church soon discovered their preacher was not easily replaced. A bit chagrined, the officiary asked Dr. Edwards to supply. Imagine a minister returning with poise and power to the pulpit from which he had been released! He accepted the invitation and remained until his successor was called.

The only church offered him was a very small congregation in Stockbridge, Massachusetts, where he also served as missionary to the Housatonic Indians. In spite of the hardships brought upon him and his large family, this servant of God maintained a beautiful spirit. It was in this obscure parish that he wrote Freedom of Will, and other celebrated works. From this unsung pulpit, in 1757, Jonathan Edwards was called to the presidency of the College of New Jersey, now Princeton University. A glimpse of greatness!

II

Also, greatness is seen in one's reaction to physical disintegration. Ill-health has a way of testing personality. This was brought home to me recently as I sat with our sons seeing for the second time the old movie, *The Pride of the Yankees.* Lou Gehrig was a remarkable man. You remember how he grew up in New York, worked his way through Columbia, then went immediately with the Yankees. He had the strength of a giant, the grace of a dancer, the charm of a lady, the tenderness of a child.

The last chapter of Gehrig's life is worthy of contemplation. It began in the winter of 1938-39. "Lou" was a fine ice-skater, but that winter he fell repeatedly. The following spring at baseball camp he worked hard, but something was wrong. The perfect player wasn't there. On April 30, 1939, the Yankees played the Senators. Gehrig went to bat four times and struck out in order. The Yankees lost. Monday was an off day. Tuesday the Yankees played the Tigers. "Lou" went to Joe McCarthy in the dugout and told him, "I always said that when I felt I couldn't help the team any more, I'd take myself out of the line-up. I guess that time has come."

The "Iron Man's" 2,130 consecutive game record thus came to an end. Gehrig went to Mayo's clinic. There, X-rays showed he had seventeen assorted fractures that had healed by themselves—but he never missed a game! The real pronouncement, however, was that "Lou" was "living on borrowed time." He had become the victim of an incurable disease.

On July 4, 1939, one of the most remarkable services ever held took place at Yankee Stadium. Celebrities from all walks of life crowded the park. At last the honored gentleman stood before the microphone. In a voice thick with emotion Lou said: "For the past two weeks you have been reading about a bad break . . . yet, to-day, I consider myself the luckiest man on the face of the earth . . ."

Many positions were offered Mr. Gehrig. A restaurant owner offered $30,000 a year for the use of his name. He finally accepted an appointment by the late Mayor LaGuardia as a City Parole Officer, at $6,000 a year. He listened to the stories of derelicts and brought to his job characteristic keenness and kindess. He worked when he could not move his arms. He died June 2 ,1941, and never a word of complaint did he utter. A glimpse of greatness!

III

Greatness can never be disassociated from Christian service. When one decides to go God's way, to allow himself to be used for the propagation of Christ's Gospel, a quality of greatness emerges unlike any other. During the past year our attention has been called to perhaps the most phenomenal man in the world, Albert Schweitzer. "A doctor four times over—in philosophy, in theology, in music, and in medicine."

He was born January 14, 1875, at Kayserburg in Upper Alsace. He was a son of the manse, and one of five children. His biographer, George Seaver, claims that he showed no precocity in any direction as a child, save in music. At nine he was assistant organist in the village church. At the age of twenty-one, and after considerable deliberation, Schweitzer resolved to devote his life to science and music until he was thirty, and then give himself to suffering humanity. So, in 1913, Dr. and Mrs. Schweitzer, under the Paris Missionary Society, though at their own expense, went out to Equatorial Africa, as he expressed it, "To try and live in the spirit of Jesus."

Returning recently from the famous Colorado Conference of intellectuals, Dr. Schweitzer stepped off the train in a Chicago temperature of 99°. As he stood visiting, a woman appeared carrying two heavy suitcases. Schweitzer left his friends, took the cases and carried them into the train. It is said that several men, observing the courtesy of Schweitzer, intercepted other laden travelers and busied themselves imitating their guest.

The story of Schweitzer is a living sermon on love and service. He left comfort and fame to minister to the natives in the swamps of Africa. In this prophet, priest, and physician we comprehend more clearly the injunction of Jesus: "Whoever would be great among you must be your servant. . . ."

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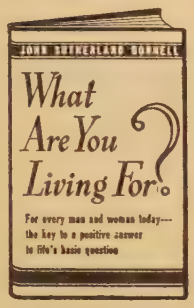

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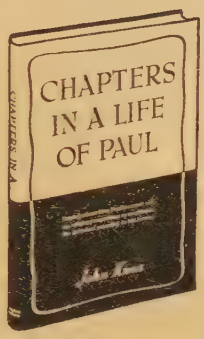

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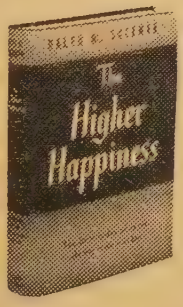

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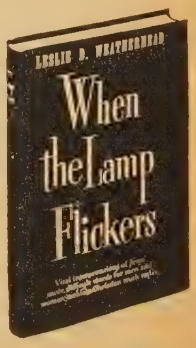

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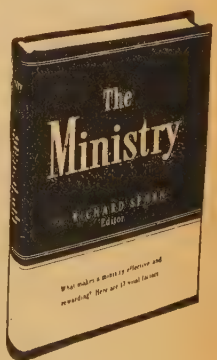

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The Application of God's Abundance

By D. A. BODE*

DEAR CHRISTIAN FRIENDS: Another week of our allotted time has passed bringing many and varied experiences in our spiritual life, somewhat like the weather itself which brought winter cold, summer heat and pouring rains within the short space of seven days. Amidst all of our experiences, however, we have felt that God has blessed us both in material and in spiritual things far beyond our deserving. Evidently he has a special purpose in treating us so kindly. Shall we try to discover that purpose this morning?

(Mark 12:4-44) This excellent but brief gospel story furnishes the key to our study. A poor widow found the secret of life and she proved it in a matchless manner by going to the temple and placing her hard-earned money into the sacred treasury. Christ saw this perfect act of worship, and he approved it fully.

Yet there were many people present in the temple that day who went away from the same hour of prayer only partially satisfied. They were rich people, folks who had far more material wealth than the poor widow, and they had made a liberal offering to the sacred treasury. But the Savior looked deep into their souls and he found in each one of them some undeveloped possibilities. Their spiritual efforts, though good and commendable to a certain degree, were capable of higher attainments.

We are also Christians who are prosperous in our business affairs, and we feel that it will be uplifting for us to review this story carefully and discover the true application of God's abundance in our lives.

I

First, *abaundance should stir us to a stronger faith.* Our lives have been planned and shaped by the heavenly Father, and he placed us in this particular community life of western Ohio. Countless influences, hereditary and environmental, have helped to shape our destiny. Thus we have a very comfortable situation today—good jobs, happy homes, efficient schools, agreeable neighbors, inviting churches, pleasant recreation, a sweet land of liberty. We need not selfishly use all of these privileges for ourselves, but we can find an unexampled joy in devoting much of our material and spiritual wealth to God's work, even as the poor widow. Did the Psalmist have us in mind when he wrote Psalm 16, 6—"The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places?"

II

Secondly, *abundance should stir us to a deeper humility.* Man is by nature proud and boastful. He imagines himself capable of doing everything for himself. Why should the scientific man worry about rain and drought, cold and heat, storms and winds? Can he not overcome their contrary influences? But, just when we prate most glibly of our conquests, we begin to hear reports of trouble. We have often been interrupted in our onward march to prosperity. Sickness, deceitfulness of supposed friends, the hand of death, eras of depression, and other inimical forces have blocked our path. The poor widow exemplifies this. But did she give up? No! In deepened humility she placed herself under the strictest obligations to give a faithful account unto her God. Perhaps the apostle Peter was thinking of her when he wrote (1 Peter 5,6), "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time."

During my seminary days I was sent to South Dakota to help in serving a number of churches which were widely scattered over the vast prairies, and, on one occasion, I attended church services in a Mennonite settlement. These people were the very picture of humility —their plain clothing, the common treasury, the simple kindergarten, the austere sanctuary. Yet, on that Sunday a layman read a sermon entitled, *The Need of More Christian Humility.* This was a sincere exhortation to all of the Mennonites to divest themselves more fully of all foolish pride in worldly and spiritual matters!

Brethren, let us be humble before God today and at all times, even as our forefathers taught us, both by precept and by example. This land of America was settled by pioneers whose humility and trust in God still influence us greatly. Our local community has developed from the early German settlers who brought their Bibles with them into their little log cabins and prayed to God, "Help us, Lord, for all of our days we must depend on thy blessings alone." Has not this prayer been answered most fully and beautifully in our lives?

III

Thirdly, *abundance should stir us to a life of uprightness.* We have no idea how these rich men accumulated their money, whether by honest or dishonest methods. Zacchaeus confessed to Christ that there were all kinds of opportunities to practice oppression and unfairness in this mad pursuit of wealth. Countless stories of such contemptible conduct are related in sacred and in secular literature; nor are they missing from our daily newspapers. We, as Christians, can have no part

*D. A. Bode is pastor of The Evangelical and Reformed Church of New Knoxville, Ohio—the second in the series of Twelve Great Churches of America being studied by the Editors of *The Christian Century.*

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in any dishonesty, untruthfulness, oppression, or hatred. Our life of faith does not permit us to do anything but to love God and our neighbor. We dare not take any dishonest dollars for they cry out against us in holy anger.

No one has ever yet garnered any real pleasure from unrighteous money, yet there is a steady march of newly-convicted men and women into the prisons of America. Many of these unfortunate souls are professing Christians who have deceived themselves into thinking that they could "get away with it."

Most transgressors will not realize their sins. On the contrary they will plan new crimes and be idolized for this boldness by many youth of America. I preached in the jail at Erie, Pa., and after the service an older prisoner said to me, "I am innocent of any wrongdoing; tell the warden to let me out." I spoke to the warden and he said, "Pastor, almost all of the criminals say that they are innocent, and that is why I asked you to come and preach to them today, hoping that you would be able to reveal their wickedness to them."

It is indeed a difficult task to teach people the heinousness of unrighteousness and to convince them that they should play fair with their fellowmen. We can all have ample abundance of earthly things by practicing sincere integrity in all of our dealings with our fellowmen.

IV

Fourthly, *abundance should stir us unto a fuller, inner peace.* Peace, mentioned so often in the Bible, cannot be purchased by money. There are many famous novels, dramas, operas, paintings which convey the tragic message of the impotency of gold to fill the soul with peace.

We do not need very much to make us happy. The apostle Paul said, "And having food and raiment, let us be therewith content." Solomon was one of the world's richest men; he had everything he could desire except peace. His very name means "peace," yet he did not find its secret. Jesus, a greater than Solomon, had nowhere to lay his head, but he is the Prince of Peace who said, "My peace I give unto you." No group of people have a finer portion of God's abundance than we have; shall we not then apply this abundance to cherish his peace in our souls?

V

Fifthly, *abundance should stir us to an increase of sharing with others.* These rich men had a certain view of sharing their material possessions with other folks, a view which permitted them to retain a big portion for themselves. The poor widow reasoned that she still had ample means for her sustenance. This act of complete sharing captivated the Savior's mind and heart so fully that he made it an inspiration for countless generations.

Shall we ponder this truth for a few moments? This sharing refers to all relationships of life.

The marriage vows bind husband and wife to a life of sharing of mutual joys and sorrows, trials and temptations. Although many marriages collapse, there are countless numbers which lead to silver and golden jubilee celebrations. Learn the secret of sharing God's abundant provisions for a happy married life, and you will surely have a fine home.

God gave us an abundance of time also, allowing us the ample space of six days to earn our daily bread; then he asked us to share the seventh day with him. Selfish people defy God and ignore his temple. We have inherited a profound respect for the Lord's day. Let us fight against all forces which would rob us of this rest and worship. Shall we accept God's abundance and refuse to observe the Sabbath day?

God gave us a wonderful country, the melting pot of the nations. It is a beautiful country, more developed in material things than any other nation in history. Why do we have this country? So that we might learn to share these privileges with the rest of the world. All nations hitherto have been extremely selfish. Can the leadership of the Christian church build an unselfish America? Will we do as Jesus said, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature?" This local congregation has believed that doctrine, for our young people and our money have gone from our midst to the ends of the earth.

This is the true way of preaching the gospel; this is the right application of God's abundance. I attended a ministers' meeting in Rochester, N. Y. and I heard Walter Rauschenbush speak concerning the factories, the labor unions and the strike situation, summing up some of the fearful injustices which were taking place. A minister arose and suggested that the members of the clergy should leave the meeting, go down to the factories and picket them, holding the placards up high. Then Dr. Rauschenbush arose, holding a New Testament in his hand, and he said, "Brethren, there are thousands of workers who can do the picket work, but you have been appointed to preach the gospel; and if you fail in your task there will be no one to take your place." For a quarter of a century the words of this wise man have re-echoed in my ministry, "Preach the gospel!" This includes the gospel of the right relationship between the employers and the workers—God's abundance sufficient for all.

Truly God is good to us and we will say to him this morning, "Help us, O Wonderful Creator, to translate all material goodness into spiritual virtues, "Love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance—liberality." Thus we will share our lives with other people even as Jesus Christ shared his earthly life so fully with us.

A recent cartoon shows an older minister advising his curate that if he wishes to get ahead in the church he ought to steer clear of politics and religion! (Allen Hackett.)

Innocently stinging was the little school-boy's essay, "The armistice was signed November 11th, 1918, and since then we have observed two minutes peace every year.—*Quote.*

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God Is My Light

By FRANCIS B. SAYRE

WE ARE LIVING, these days, through some of the most exciting drama of history. However woefully short our Western civilization may fall from Christian ideals, at least it is one resting fundamentally upon the sanctity of individual human personalities, upon the supremacy of human values over material ones, upon a rule of law based upon conceptions of justice and conscience and right. Against this civilization of ours is today ranged all of Eastern Europe and a part of the peoples of Asia.

In the basic issues which make for peace or war now confronting us, how shall true Christians take their stand? Consider, for instance, the explosive problem of dependent peoples, which, in his recent address at Columbia University, Pandit Nehru put first as one of the underlying causes of war in the modern world. And well he might, for over 200 million people in the world today are non-self-governing.

The problem of dependent peoples, which in one form or another has tormented Europe for over four centuries, will never be solved until we come to realize the Christian fundamental that the supreme values in the world are human personalities. Every alien rule based upon mass injustice or exploitation of human beings sows the seeds of unrest and revolution and makes against international stability and lasting peace.

Much of the outlived colonialism of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was based upon flagrant exploitation. In the light of modern twentieth century standards evolved from changed world conditions, exploitation can no longer be tolerated. A marked new trend is manifesting itself today. Millions of dependent peoples are becoming independent, particularly since the setting up of the United Nations. During the past few years the Philippines, Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, India, Pakistan, Burma, Ceylon, Korea, Israel, and Nepal have achieved their independence. Indonesia, Libya, Somaliland, and Indo-China loom on the horizon. Living within these states are close to one-fourth of all the people on this earth.

There remain, however, other millions of underdeveloped and uneducated and poverty-ridden peoples who are not yet prepared for independence. Until they can be successfully led out of the valley of ignorance and prejudice and dire poverty there can be no sound solution to the problem of dependent peoples and consequently no stable world security.

To meet this problem the framers of the United Nations Charter at San Francisco established the international trusteeship system, built upon the conception that the interests of dependent peoples constitute a "sacred trust" of civilization. The Trusteeship Council was set up as one of the six principal organs of the United Nations to clothe this conception with flesh and blood.

In attacking the problems of dependent peoples within the Trusteeship Council, what should be the policy of a Christian America? The Soviet propagandists, seeing their chance to attack the western colonial powers as imperialists bent on exploiting down-trodden races, cry aloud for the "liberation" of all dependent peoples. But surely the true welfare of such dependent peoples as are living in a sixteenth or seventeenth century world of their own in the dark reaches of Africa or Asia is not to be solved, as the Soviet propagandists would have us believe, by immediate independence. The real problems go far deeper than mere political status. Genuine solutions can come only through slow processes of education and training in the complex tasks of government and administration.

The United States did not give to the Filipino people immediate independence in 1898. Instead, for over forty years, we toiled in the Islands training the people in processes of democratic government, developing programs of popular education, of public health, of road construction, and economic upbuilding.

Along the same pathway the United States is now administering the trust territory of the Pacific Islands —Kwajalein, Tinian, Truk, and the other former mandated islands which we wrested from Japan. To teach the ways of democratic government, over one hundred local municipalities have been organized and approximately 80% of the island inhabitants of voting age today enjoy some form of suffrage. Only two years after assuming our trusteeship responsibilities, nearly every inhabited island today has its elementary schools. Primary education has been made compulsory. One out of every six of the indigenous population is at school. Public health programs have been inaugurated. Disease has been dramatically reduced. The incidence of yaws has been lowered from 90% to 5%. Malnutrition has been virtually eliminated. That illustrates, it seems to me, the Christian approach to the problem. And it is along these general lines that the Trusteeship Council today is hard at work.

RACE DISCRIMINATION

Another of the basic sources of international unrest in the modern world lies in the problem of racial relations. The Christian approach to the problem of race discrimination is very clear. Christ's unyielding insistence upon the fatherhood of God and the consequent brotherhood of man must mean the breakdown of every racial, national, and social barrier which separates man from man.

Our deep-rooted American faith in freedom and fundamental human rights without distinctions of race, creed, or color is built upon strong Christian traditions. It is interesting that the insistence of the United Nations on this same faith is spurring us, as well as other peoples, to wipe away within the national boundaries the stain of racial discrimination. Such

stains are weakening us in our relations with Asia and Africa.

THE THREAT OF POVERTY

Another of the basic causes of war is the abject poverty of millions of human beings in certain economically backward areas of the world. In these days of Twentieth Century interdependency such areas invite communism. Enduring peace cannot be built upon starvation and want. It happens that in many areas of the world today only ignorance, lack of technological knowledge and inability to procure necessary capital advances stand in the way of general progress and heightened standards of living. President Truman in his inaugural address recognized this in his "Point Four" program. "More than half the people of the world," he said, "are living in conditions approaching misery. . . . For the first time in history, humanity possesses the knowledge and the skill to relieve the suffering of these people."

Here is needed the help of the Christian economist and banker and engineer. The program of helping nations to raise their standards of living through technological assistance is not new. But in the conception of a coordinated global program for thus building sound foundations for a peaceful world the program is breathtaking. It will require sacrifice and understanding and infinite patience. But Christians will understand it and will give to it their staunch support as part of the Christian foundation for world peace.

Other problems keep crowding in upon us. What shall be our policy in China and the Far East? Military assistance is no longer possible, even were it wise. But this being granted, the Christian cannot be content with a do-nothing policy. Through American ingenuity some constructive way must be found to help the Chinese and the other peoples of the Far East to achieve peace within their own borders and to protect themselves against exploitation by bears in sheep's clothing.

Or, again, how shall we resolve the problem of the British sterling balances? Surely the day is past when we can be content to center our efforts merely upon exacting the payment of the debts. Surely we will want to find some practicable way of helping the British people in their heroic post-war struggle and also some solution which will not in its global repercussions upset the stability and welfare of countless other peoples.

SUPPORT THE UNITED NATIONS

Of still greater importance is a Christian implementation of the United Nations. It is surely God's will to lift man above the barbaric savagery of war. Under twentieth century conditions, as we now well realize, the only possible pathway to this end lies through organized and determined international collaboration. The United Nations is the single organization in the world today with makes such collaboration possible. It is the hope of the world if our Western civilization, which is based essentially upon Christian fundamentals is to survive.

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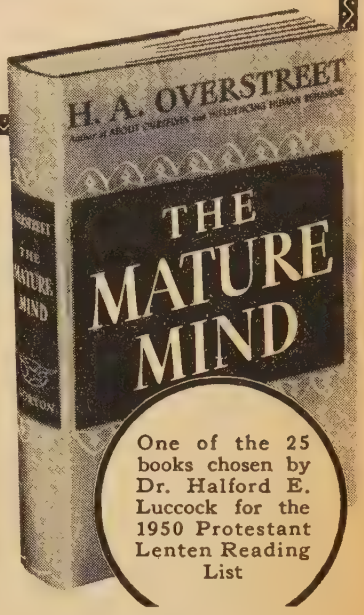

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But mere programs for improved political arrangements, Atlantic Pacts, Point IV programs, popular education among dependent peoples, a strengthened United Nations, these, whether pursued separately or in combination, are not enough. The real causes of our present world disorder are spiritual rather than political. Therefore, the genuine solution, if it is to be effective, cannot be other than a spiritual one.

Without solid moral and spiritual foundations, the statesman, the economist, the scientist, are powerless to build for human progress.

When lies and broken promises destroy the sanctity of the pledged word, treaties lose their value. When religious teaching breaks down in the home and school, and individuals lose their sense of right and wrong, national morality ceases to exist and national conduct comes to be governed solely by expediency and immediate selfish interest. When secularism supplants religion in the private lives of men and women, the holiness of God comes to be eclipsed by the totalitarianism of the state. Then protection for the law-abiding vanishes, the precious heritages of Western civilization become liquidated, and mankind reverts to primitive strong-arm rule. That, alas, is what is happening in Eastern Europe today. Sheer rationalism without an underpinning of morality ends in futility and chaos.

Nations are not mystical entities. Nations are people. A changed world means changed people. And the only humanly possible way to change people is through some power outside of themselves. The inexorable moral laws of the universe bear with exactly the same force upon nations as upon men.

The real cure for our present international disorder is for the people of Christian nations to recapture their faith in the limitless and matchless power of Christian fundamentals as taught by Jesus Christ. Such a statement sounds like mere cant. It is not. It is the sober conclusion of a vast multitude, who in all sincerity have struggled in different fields to find the answer and who have become convinced that there is no other. In spite of man's triumphant advance in science, in spite of his shining material progress, man without God is powerless to solve the human problems.

Do you remember how Arnold Toynbee, commenting on the motto of the University of Oxford, *Dominus Illuminatio Mea* ("God is my light"), sums the matter up? "If we believe in these three words, *Dominus Illuminatio Mea,*" he says, "and can live up to them, we can look forward without dismay to any future that may be coming to us. The material future is very little in our power. Storms might come . . . but if the truth . . . about ourselves is told in those three Latin words . . . then we know for certain that, though the stones may fall, the light by which we live will not go out."

America's surest defense lies not in a policy of anti-this or anti-that, nor even in massive armament. Let America become the creative center of a resurgent Christianity pouring out across the world, and all other issues will fall into place. Let us banish all fear, and know that genuine Christianity is unconquerable.

A Pilot's Faith

By ELMER G. GORMAN

IN OUR HOMES where we have an earthly father and mother, and brothers and sisters, we grow to love one another more and more. Our homes come to be places of fun and friendship, places of comfort and help, places where we meet life, where we learn and dream and dare to do.

God has so placed us on the earth that we have a good beginning. In our young, tender days we feel close to him, and he lives close to us. He speaks to us in the joy of bird flight, or the color of a wing. How many times we have watched, holding our breath, while some feathered friend flew through sunlight, or swung upon a treetop, or visited brilliant flowers, or pierced the night with soft voice, and we looked wondering even if through the darkness we might catch some glimpse of him, or understand what it was he spoke. Lying all stretched out and drowsy, yet wakeful beneath the stars, we felt somehow that they and God were near.

When St. Paul asked: "Do you not know that you are God's temple," we understood. We all seem to know that if we make room for him in our *hearts,* he will be able to enter in and have a place within us that he may call home. We all seem to know, when we think of it, that our *minds,* too, make a place for him. Through right thinking, good thinking, stretching our thoughts with his help, he enters our thoughts and has a place there to dwell.

Often we stand in awe of human greatness. A Christ walks in Galilee, a Socrates in Athens, a Buddha and a Mahatma Gandhi in India, an Albert Schweitzer in Africa, a Li Po and a Lao Tzu in China. Even the lives of men less great dazzle us, and viewing the humble earth on which we live we are set to wondering.

A Socrates loved life, life in which man thinks, thinks hard and true, life in which the mind is used in dedication like good seed that is planted in a good field, life which lives through and beyond death.

Xenophon, writing so many centuries ago, quotes Socrates as reasoning for persuasion rather than violence: "for who would rather take a man's life than have a live and willing follower?"

Such reasoning cannot seem to be only abstract and speculative when we find it incarnate in Socrates.

A Buddha sought and found enlightment and is known for his compassion and gentleness—his feeling with all beings.

A Mahatma Gandhi longed and lived for social justice for all, looked deep into each person and saw a child of God; saw how India should be free in a free world (and the word *free* comes from the old

Sanskrit word meaning *to love*), saw that outcastes and untouchables are not outcastes and untouchables, but children of God: and so he called them.

An Albert Schweitzer sees all life as a gift of God, and so lives as to reverence it all. Writing in the room of his jungle hospital in Equatorial Africa late at night with atmosphere heavy and hot and humid, he keeps the shutters tightly closed, cutting off his main outside air supply and thus any hope for breeze, so that no creature, not even the least moth, will enter and perish in the lamp's flame. Schweitzer takes each duty as an opportunity to serve life. Recently, in Chicago, he told us of his gratitude for medicines from America for the healing of black Africans, and how he sets himself to labelling the bottles three times, because of white ants that love to eat the labels. One label is pasted even on the bottom of the bottle in the hope that at least one label might survive and remain readable.

A Christ kept his soul for God, felt like a child and called, "Father"; saw the lilies of the field and the flight of birds and knew how much more God cares for each one of us; thought about the difference between what is wrong and what is right and tried in every choice—in each single choice—to choose the right, the good, the true, the everlasting beauty. Christ believed in love, believed it was better and stronger than hate, and so lived that today he is a sun in our sky, stars in the heavens, a friend who never leaves us, and, in our troubled world, our hope.

A MAN ON THE CROSS

SATURDAY NIGHT (September 17) several thousand people thronged Madison Street, attracted by what appeared to be a man climbing up the spire to the cross of the Temple. The strange play of lights and shadows did give the appearance of a moving figure. The rumor spread that a man was going to the cross, possibly to leap to his death.

For two hours the crowds watched. Police and newspaper reporters added to the general excitement. Sunday morning Dr. Goff told the story, concluding with these words. "We have crosses on churches all over the world. I'm afraid they are not looked at very often. Here we have one, the highest of all—yet actually seen by a relatively small number Why?

"We now know that crowds gather when they think a man is on the cross. That makes the symbol 'come alive.' But there are few who are willing to go to a cross. There was one once who did, and his cross has become the world's most moving symbol."—*From the Sunday Bulletin; First Methodist Church; Chicago, Illinois (Charles Ray Goff, pastor).*

One afternoon two soldiers were talking and one of the soldiers ventured to ask the other if he ever read much poetry. "Yes," said the young man, "certain kinds. For instance, I like that poem which says, 'God's in his heaven, all's *riot* with the world!' "

A little boy was asked to define a conservative. He said, "A conservative is a kind of greenhouse where you look at the moon."

A certain movie director, when asked if he had read H. G. Wells' Outline of History, replied, "Nope, I thought it might make a picture, but I looked at the ending and I don't like the way the story comes out!"

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The Lazy Duck

A Sermon for Children by John E. Bates

ALL OF US want to grow-up to be great men or great women. In school we like to be told how good we are as students; and we always feel good when we hear of some one who is not quite as good as we are. Deep down in our hearts all of us want to be good boys and girls.

Being good or being bad is a matter of forming good or bad habits. In Sunday School and in church we learn of a man who lived a life so good that we use him as an example after whom we seek to pattern our lives.

As we grow older our opportunities for growing in goodness will decrease unless we try, unless we really put forth an effort. There is a very interesting story of a duck who grew too lazy and I would like to tell it to you so that you may see what happened to him as a result of his laziness.

One year a flock of wild ducks were flying south. As they passed over a farm, one of them saw a flock of tame ducks eating corn in their pen, so he left the flock and went down to join them. He stayed there all year.

The next year when the wild ducks were flying south again, he heard them honking as they soared in wild freedom through the skies. Oh how he wanted to join them, and yet the corn was so good that he decided to wait another year. So another year passed and again he heard them, and felt the call to fly into the blue skies. But he stayed. The easy life appealed to him.

Another year passed and the wild ducks flew overhead again. This time he could not resist the call. He wanted to join his comrades in the skies. So he spread his great wings, flapped them—and nothing happened! He had waited too long. He had grown too fat to fly. A prisoner of his own bad habits, he had been more interested in living an easy life than in living as God had intended him to live, as a free and beautiful creature.

Like the duck, if we wait too long to be ourselves, too long to build good habits, we, too, shall be unable to free ourselves from our bad habits. We shall be unable to raise ourselves.

PURIM

ONE of the most colorful and joyous of all the Jewish holidays is the festival of "Purim." It is celebrated in the Hebrew month of Adar (March), and commemorates the salvation of the Jews from destruction in the reign of the Persian King, Ahasuerus (485-464 B.C.)

In the synagogue on the evening of Purim, the rabbi reads the traditional service from the "Megillah" which is based on the Book of Esther in the Bible. The "Megillah" retells the story of Haman, the king's high minister, who was angered at the refusal of Mordecai, a Jew, to bow down before him according to royal edict. Haman persuaded Ahasuerus to issue an order condemning all the Jews in Persia to death. Whereupon Mordecai's beautiful niece, Esther, whom Ahasuerus had made queen, risked the king's wrath by appearing unsummoned before him to plead for her people. Ahasuerus ordered the wicked Haman executed, permitting the Jews to rise up and defend themselves on the day appointed for their execution, while Mordecai was raised to high estate in the land.

In some synagogues, the reading of the "Megillah" is greeted with spirited reaction from the congregation. At every mention of Haman's name, there is much stamping of feet signifying disfavor; "Groggers" or noisemakers are whirled for emphasis.

The name "Purim" comes from the word "pur" meaning "lot". The term refers to the casting of lots before Haman to determine the day of disaster for the Jews, a day which turned instead into one of triumph. According to the tradition of the Purim season, Jews are required to give "shalah-monat" or gifts to each other and the poor.

The traditional Purim food is "haman-taschen," literally "Haman hats." They are little cakes filled with prunes or honey-sweetened poppy-seeds and shaped in the form of the three-cornered hat worn by Haman.

The importance of this holiday is evidenced by the many forms in which the Purim story has been perpetuated. There are Purim songs, plays, dances, pantomimes, paintings; and in Tel-Aviv, there are Purim parades with elaborately decorted floats depicting tableaux of various incidents in the ancient story.

Though joymaking in a carnival sense was forbidden in Jewish ritual after the destruction of the second temple in Jerusalem (70 B.C.), this restriction is lifted on at least two occasions in the Jewish calendar: "Simhat Torah," the rejoicing over the Torah which marks the end of the harvest festival of Succoth, and Purim.

Like Easter, which occurs at the same season of the year, Purim is a time of renewed faith, symbolizing for Jews a rebirth of hope for the ultimate triumph of good over evil.—*Religious Press Committee*

Universal Brotherhood

There is a phrase that sounds so good,
'Tis *universal brotherhood;*
We often roll it off the tongue
As lightly as a song is sung,
As though its final implications
Had naught to do with life's relations.

This fatal adjective and noun
Hound-like and true, have tracked me down.
Once they were far o'er distant seas,
Like Africa and the Pyrenees,
But God has brought them to my door,
And I must face them evermore.

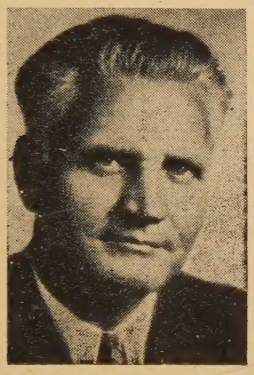
—Joseph C. Yemm.

What Makes a Good Sermon?

Series III

THE PREACHER in the pulpit has a teriffic responsibility. He is the ambassador of Christ and by the power of his words he is to bring men into communion with God. For this challenging assignment he can usually allot himself no more than twenty to thirty minutes out of a Sunday service. His words must count!

Luther W. Youngdahl



It is, of course, recognized that the preacher must utilize many skills in the effective delivery of a good sermon. His physical appearance, the quality and tone of voice, the proper use of gestures, the earnestness of presentation—the force of his entire personality—must be brought to bear upon the task of the moment, which is the winning of his hearers to Christ.

Here, however, we are concerned solely with the content of the sermon. What must be the ingredients of the good sermon? I shall point to just two needs which I believe should be fulfilled.

First, the sermon must be constructed upon the solid spiritual foundation of the Bible. I feel that the sermon should draw heavily and ably from this book. One hears many sermons today which deal with burning social issues and grave moral situations but fail to point up the fact that the Bible holds the answers to these dilemmas of mankind. I want to hear a message from a minister who knows his Bible thoroughly and can present the wonderful message of hope it contains.

Secondly, the good sermon is the one which succeeds in translating that message into everyday life. It reveals especially that Christ has a definite place in the practical affairs of the world.

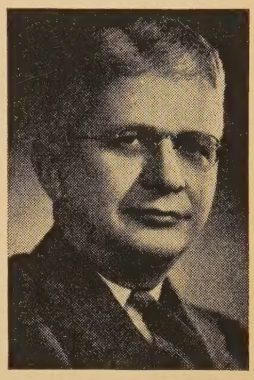
Christ was the greatest preacher of all. He used only simple words and simple stories. But by them he was able to win men to God. In his parables are the keys to effective preaching. The modern minister must likewise have the ability to draw upon a storehouse of practical illustrations which are taken from actual life and, through them, show his congregation how Christianity can be made to work in business, in the school, in the home, in every area of life.

The preacher can give this ingredient to his message only if he has learned to live among people himself. He must know of their hopes and despairs, their victories and defeats. Too many sermons are only academic discussions of the Bible. They fail to touch the heart because the preacher has not learned to mingle with the community and to sense the needs of his congregation. Christ was capable of preaching great sermons as a result of his understanding the spiritual requirements of the people with whom he was in daily contact.

If a man would preach good sermons, then, let him be an intense student of the Bible and of human life. Only in this way can he develop the spiritual resources upon which to draw in the presentation of a sermon that will grip the conscience of his congregation and inspire them to follow Christ through the trials and temptations of modern life.

I AM constantly thankful that I was born into a Christian home and was brought into close contact early in life with distinguished Christian gentlemen—bishops, ministers, and teachers. Since my earliest recollections, we have entertained, as guests in our home, such well-known servants of God as Bishop Charles H. Fowler, William A. Quayle, Charles Bayard Mitchell, Charles Wesley Burns, and Richard C. Raines; Drs. Andrew Gillies, James S. Montgomery, now Chaplain of the House of Representatives in Washington, Lucius H. Bugbee, John Callahan, former "Bishop of New York's Bowery," Gypsy Smith, world renowned evangelist, Ralph W. Sockman, Harris F. Rall, Lynn Harold Hough, Henry Hitt Crane, Thomas A. Stafford, Dean Charles R. Brown and Professor William Lyon Phelps, both of Yale, and scores of others—all of whom have had a deep, lasting, and significant influence for good upon my life. My acquaintance with them has educated me in good preaching and Christian leadership. All of these gentlemen were and are outstanding preachers and have lived devoted, consecrated lives. My friendship with these men in later years has, I believe,

Bradshaw Mintener



made me critically appreciative as to what makes a good sermon. It has been a rare privilege and an inspirational experience to have known these outstanding Christians intimately and to have heard them preach frequently.

What makes a good sermon? This question cannot be answered in the same way by everyone. A recent Gallup Poll showed that 97% of our population in the United States consider the sermon to be the paramount feature in a service of public worship. So far as I am concerned, as a regular churchgoer, a good sermon must meet at least several of the following requirements:

A good sermon must satisfy the fundamental cravings of the people who hear or read it. In 1943 there was published a book entitled, *The World's Great Sermons,* a monumental work containing 101 sermons encompassing the vast period between *The Sermon on the Mount* and *The Mirrors of God* by Allan Knight Chalmers, preached in the early 1940's. This collection includes sermons by Protestants, Catholics, and Jews, and they were chosen as being among the world's great sermons because they "satisfy the fundamental cravings of mankind which are to be

found among all men and in all ages—drawn from a desire for knowledge, hope, comfort, challenge, constructive action, and pointed condemnation."

A good sermon must come from a person who is entirely sincere, who has had a deep and real Christian experience and who loves people.

A good sermon usually is the product of a deep faith and is developed by hard work. "No good sermon was ever shaken out of a sleeve."

A good sermon must be based on a vital theme, one that stems from life, one that is both timely and timeless, and one that "makes a difference to people whether the sermon is preached or not."

A good sermon should plumb the depths of the areas in which people have lived, are now living, or want to live—in other words, a sermon dealing with *life situations,* the leading exponent of which is my own pastor, Dr. Harold W. Ruopp, one of the great preachers of America.

Inasmuch as "there is nothing new under the sun" a good sermon will state old truths effectively and uniquely in a new way so that they will be impressed indelibly upon the minds of the congregation.

I believe that fifty percent of a good sermon results from that which the preacher says and fifty percent from that which the congregation brings to the preacher. I find that great preachers speak to *me* and that I interpret the most effective preaching as being to me individually.

In my judgment a good sermon tells you *how* to deal with the problems of life and furnishes you with "handles" to help you master fear, keep and enrich your faith, meet a specific problem, help you to pray and worship.

A good sermon is like an old melody which strikes a responsive chord and helps the congregation to think through problems for themselves—to relate and refer the sermon to one's own experience, causing one to react and to ask, "Why did I not think of that before?"

A good sermon should restore our wonder at God's world. It should make us marvel at the handiwork of God: man created in his image, the stars, the beauty of the earth, and the reality of God. It should make us realize that "this is my Father's world."

A good sermon should arouse us to action, lift us out of ourselves and stir us to creating, in the words of Dr. Elton Trueblood, "Beloved Communities" and "Redemptive Fellowships."

A good sermon should acquaint us with great people—the great minds and personalities of the past and present by use of the biographical method.

The most effective sermon for me is one which "listens" well and also reads well. In other words, it is a combination of a good homiletic sermon and a fine essay. One of the contemporary masters of this type of sermon is my good friend, Dr. Frederick Brown Harris, Pastor of Foundry Methodist Church, Washington, D.C., and Chaplain of the United States Senate.

A good sermon must come from a man of deep conviction, who thinks clearly and feels deeply. Dr. Sizoo has said, "His feet must be planted upon a rock which no storm can beat down; he must carry a light which no darkness can dim. He must be able to take his stand, saying, 'This is one thing I know.'"

"Preaching is still the open door to men's hearts. It is the preacher who molds the spiritual life of the nation and it is to the preacher the world looks today for leadership in faith and the brotherhood of man."

Preaching Jesus Christ is preaching hope, faith, love, and God. A good sermon will bring its hearers nearer to the City of God. Now is the time for the preachers to lead the laity in finding ways to enable the Church to grasp its opportunity for spiritual leadership in the world. "Now is the hour." Good sermons of power and conviction will go a long way toward keeping us steady in God's way—toward bringing God to men and men to God.

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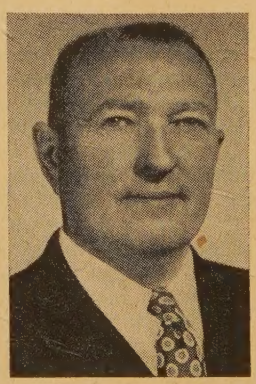
MANY years ago the First Presbyterian Church in Orlando, Florida, needed a pastor. Efforts to find a satisfactory minister had failed. It was agreed that each member of the Board would write to Presbyterian friends throughout the country for suggestions. Brother W. M. Slemons, than whom there was no finer gentleman or Christian, wrote as follows to

S. Kendrick Guernsey



a prominent Presbyterian in Louisville:

"We need a pastor. I hope you can recommend the man we need. We want a young man, for the duties of our church are strenuous. But we don't want one who is too young and who has had no background of experience, and whose ideas are immature. We can't consider an old man. He must be a good preacher, for Orlando is a tourist town, and we compete for their attendance. He must also be a good pastor, because many elderly people move to Florida and expect to have the attention of their pastor. We want a man with a family, but he can't have too many children, because the manse is not very large. We want a man who is thoroughly orthodox, but not too strict in his views. He must be willing to be satisfied with a fairly small salary, for our church is struggling. In short, we want a well-rounded man who will unite the discordant elements and help us build a greater church."

In due time back came a reply. "My dear Brother Slemons: At the present I can't think of any man who fills the description of the man you want. Perhaps if the Apostle Paul were living, he might fill most of the qualifications. But even he was a little short in stature. Yours very truly." Perhaps preachers reading this article will think me equally optimistic and impractical in expecting the ideal.

The factors which contribute to make a good sermon can, in my opinion as a layman, be expressed in tabular form. It should be characterized by: *sincerity, clarity, purposefulness, thoughtfulness, brevity.* It need not

evidence: *brilliance, high educational attainment, oratory, orthodoxy.*

Doubtless there are other qualifications which are desirable and important. But the foregoing come to my mind immediately, and, as a result appear to me as being fundamental.

The fatal error which some ministers make, and for which there is no forgiveness, is the tendency to speak upon political topics, current events, or some subject prominent in the press, instead of using their time to preach the Gospel and give their hearers a lasting and uplifting message.

Sermon Notes

By VIRGIL A. KRAFT

EVEN a trip in a broken-down jalopy can be fun as long as those bouncing around in it feel they are going someplace. And, riding around in a limousine eventually can become agony if the occupants have no interesting destination.

REFERRING to the fact that the American people began to lose their unity after the war, an old German philosopher remarked, "A gun or a God seems to be your dilemma." Exactly so! We must have a unifying destiny; we must have a thrilling purpose. So far as our nation is concerned, if we don't have a destiny in the name of God, we will have a destiny in the name of a gun. Nothing else is big enough to challenge us.

IT is the genius of Christianity to see glorious beginnings after calamitous endings. No matter what the ending may be—the end of a career, a home, a business, an organization, a government, a culture, a nation—no matter what the ending may be, and no matter how many of the former things are passed away, in a world of creative change, in a world packed with dynamic divinity, in a world where deserts blossom, and wounds heal, and love returns, where there is always calm after a storm and dawn after darkness and spring after winter, there will always be glorious beginnings of some kind for those who continue to hope.

JESUS believed in the possibility of remarkable reactions, reactions which are better than the ordinary. He believed that when people are abused they can be patient; when they meet foreigners they can be friendly; when they fail they can remain hopeful. Jesus believed that people can be remarkable, literally startling the world with remarkable reactions to life.

WHEN Job's wife, in her despair, advised Job to curse God and die, she described what would happen if a person did curse God. Curse God and you *will* die. When a person denies the reality of God, he develops a degrading mood which clogs the very channels of life. Indeed, he is a fool who says in his heart, "There is no God."

WHAT is religion? In simple terms, religion is devotion to God. Religion isn't a way of life. That is ethics. Some people say, "My religion is doing good." Good ethics may be the result of religion, or it may be the result of something else. Good ethics is not religion. Neither is religion worshiping or praying or singing or going on pilgrimages. Such things are results or aids. Religion basically is *devotion to God,* which means that if a person does not have faith in God, though he may be a saint, he does not have religion.

ALLEGIANCE is ennobling. Allegiance is fidelity to a person or a cause. Even though allegiance is pledged to an untruth, if it is sincere allegiance, the person will be a nobler individual than the vacillating coward who takes no stand at all.

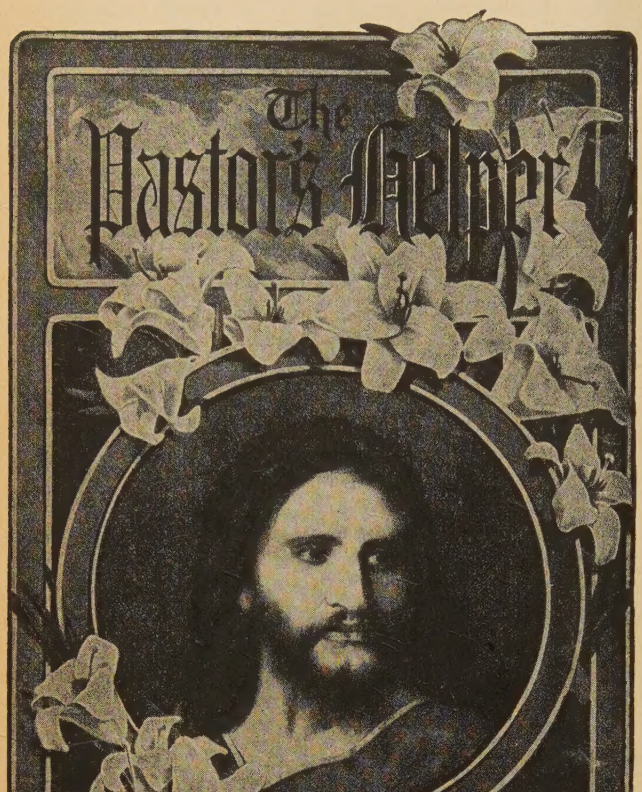
God Give

God give me love,
  Divinely purified;
Impelling love,
  That self be crucified.

God give me joy,
  Love's fervent, gay offspring,
Exalted joy,
  Its melodies to sing.

God give me peace;
  Withing thy strength repose;
Abiding peace,
  Thy nature to disclose.

—Rose C. Wilson



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